

26 April 1977

Interagency Memorandum: The West European Communists

Scope

1. Much of the necessary research and analysis on this subject has been published in monographs by OPR, ORPA, and INR, as well as in two national estimates on Italy. The purpose of this paper is to bring together in brief and focused form the main facts and judgments of the community.

2. This memorandum will assess the positions and future of the West European Communist parties, with primary attention and to those of Italy and France / secondary attention to those of Spain, Portugal and the others. It will consider inter-action between the national parties, the Euro-Communism phenomenon, and the parties' relations with the USSR and Eastern Europe. Finally, it will consider the attitudes of the major European Communist parties toward the US, the Atlantic Alliance, and the EC, and how these attitudes might evolve.

Outline

I. The PCI and PCF

A. Comparisons and contrasts in terms of:

-- the two parties' leadership

- their political objectives and strategy
- their composition, strengths, and weaknesses
- the challenge presented by their local rivals and the governing parties
- in sum, their prospects for gaining a share of power in Italy and France
- B. Relations between the PCI and PCF, and the extent to which the fortunes of one will affect the other
- C. Their roles in the Euro-Communist movement
- D. How they relate to the USSR and Eastern Europe and how they are viewed in the East
- E. Indications of change, real or apparent, in their positions toward:
 - the EC
 - NATO
 - the US and its role in Europe
- II. The Iberian CPs
 - A. Prospects for the PCE in the new Spain
 - B. Condition and current strategy of the PCP in the light of its failures
 - C. How developments in the Euro-Communism might affect the Iberian CPs
- III. Europe as a factor in influencing the European CPs
- IV. The US as a factor